

## Women's Peace Camp at Cole Bay

by Nora Ready

"Before we made the trip to Cole Bay, most of us had never been that far north before. We had an image of a wasteland, barren and unoccupied. We arrived at a place that is wooded, where flowers and berries grow and that is home to a community of native people."

Monica Grunberg of Cole Bay's Women's Peace Camp  
In August, 1983, 100 women

from Western Canada and Germany took part in an event called Women Gathering To Stop The Cruise Missile. The event, which took place in Cole Bay, Saskatchewan, consisted of workshops on such issues as feminism and militarism, Uranium mining in Saskatchewan and

local native history. From this gathering came the idea of an ongoing peace camp.

"We started out in tents in the

native community of Kipichisichakanisik, five miles from Cole Bay. When we started having problems with the local bears we decided to move into the village," said Grunberg. The camp now consists of eight women, half of whom are local native women. Vi, a Metis journalist, is a member of the camp and is involved in doing educational work in the community.

Cole Bay is one of two Cree-Metis settlements along the border of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range. This 3 million acre tract of land, which includes Cold Lake, Alberta, is where the U.S. government plans to test the Cruise missile.

The peace camp is concerned not only with the testing of the Cruise but also with what they see as a denial of aboriginal rights.

"Many of the people in the community feel that their con-



cerns have been ignored. Not all of them are willing to recognize the range as military property," said Grunberg.

For more information about the camp you can write or call:

Kipichisichakanisik  
Women's Peace Camp  
General Delivery  
Cole Bay, Saskatchewan  
SOM 0MO  
(306) 829-4232

## Science Defines Reality

by Margot Harrison

"It has been scientifically proven..." This oft heard phrase has been used to substantiate many an argument. Science is fact, uncontested and totally objective, right? Wrong. According to Alex Brett, researcher of animal resource ecology at UBC, science is never objective. Brett, when lecturing to a women studies class on October 25, stated science always comes from a cultural context.

In biology, "normal" male and female behaviour is rooted in the bias of the male scientific perspective. Brett used the example of the way in which the gamete is described. The gamete is the sexual reproductive element in either sex of any species. In the male, it's the sperm, in the female, it's the egg. Traditional literature on gametes describe the male as having an "active gamete" and the female as having a "passive gamete".

"Why not refer to the egg as energy rich and the sperm as energy deficient? It's just as valid description," said Brett.

Brett feels that our cultural view of the sexes is based on biased biological evidence.

"Basically we all study what we are interested in and find what we look for." She claims this was the case with Darwin. Darwin's theories couldn't help but be influenced by the Victorian milieu he lived in. "Victorian society was full of stringent guidelines as to what was acceptable male and female behaviour", said Brett.

The male of any species is supposed to be aggressive, strong, and have the ability to mate often. The female should be "discriminately passive" and display a certain amount of "coyness". "Through the evolutionary process, as described by Darwin, these have been the necessary traits of the sexes", said Brett.

Women should be especially wary of "scientific fact", Brett claims. She feels we should be questioning how the new reproductive technology and the experimentation with an artificial uterus will affect women. There are dangerous theories, backed by "scientific evidence", such as the notion that rape is pre-programmed behaviour when in fact it is genetic behaviour that should be critically examined.



## Marie-Claire Blais

### Art as Expression of Freedom



by Jean Kavanagh

From October 11 to 14 UVic audiences had the rare opportunity to listen and talk to one of French-Canada's most accomplished and private writers, Marie-Claire Blais.

While she is definitely one of the most important women to emerge in Canadian literature, she is not a "feminist" writer. When asked about the role of women in her work she concluded that feminism plays a silent role. "I want to address myself to universal questions of which

feminism is only one." She believes that North American women writers are united in that each of them expresses, in her own way, what it is to be a woman in contemporary society.

She believes in fiction as an art, an expression of freedom where the writer reflects the views of society. And yet Blais feels too much political content in her fiction lessens its artistic impact.

"What is marvelous about writing is the power you have to portray different perspectives. I am interested in multiple realities; a child of 13 has

her own clear vision while a woman of 40 has a totally different perspective."

"I read all the time, about three books a week when I'm not writing. Right now I'm reading Robert Musil, an Austrian writer. He wrote before the Second World War and yet he deals with the same human values we discuss today. Everything was there in the depth of his consciousness. He's very inspiring to me."

"La survie—human survival in a violent world—that is the thrust of Marie-Claire's work. Her novels, plays and poetry reflect contemporary social problems and injustices, and specifically address the problems faced by adolescents and children, 'those who carry the seeds of social consciousness'."

According to Marie-Claire Blais, today's writer is faced with a difficult task; to portray reality and increase consciousness in a society where "fiction is often seen as an evasion of reality".

"In many ways I envy writers of the past. The Bronte sisters, even with all their personal problems, were able to separate themselves and go into their rooms and concentrate. Modern life doesn't allow for this. We should reflect on what goes on everyday but still be able to withdraw and express feeling. To isolate oneself in modern society is considered sinful. But writing a novel is a spiritual, monastic process."

When asked why she will not read her works in public, Blais replied, "I write to get out of my own skin. To re-enter that is too painful."

# Robert Sutherland

by Sage Sinats

Robert Sutherland was born in Vancouver, B.C. and after spending time overseas, she now lives in Chinatown, Victoria. She studied at the Emily Carr College of Art for 2 years, and did 1 year of printmaking in England, graduating with a B.F.A. from the University of Victoria in 1982. Her work may be seen, November to December, at the Winchester Gallery, the Backroom Gallery, Open Space Gallery, and Fan Tan Gallery.

The following is a transcript of an interview with the artist.



## The Artist

I have a picture of myself on my third birthday. I was given crayons, pencils and paper. Apparently I was a pretty docile kid, but I absolutely demanded that my picture be taken with those things. So there I am, in pigtails, tightly holding my crayons and pencils.

Art was always my favourite subject. Report cards said I dreamt too much. I was always given a pencil and paper to keep me quiet. It worked. And still does.

I can't imagine life without my art, for me there is not an alternative. Someone once looked at a piece of my work—dark fibers, and one couldn't tell what else, all meshed into the surface—a dark convoluted mass. He said it was a good thing I didn't keep this all inside me or I would be really sick. It was a good thing I painted and let it out.

Where my work is going and how it will turn out is really exciting to me. It is like following a path and yet there is not a rational, tangible path that you can see. I don't know where it is going. I just grope along. It can be insecure because I can't give a rational account or explanation to the people really close to me. But this is what I am meant to do.

Sometimes being an artist is seen as an egocentric activity. I have worked overseas and know there is a lot of work to be done in the world. But given a choice to work in Africa or live in Kampuchea or paint, I would stay here and paint. I feel that painting and making art is a really important activity. It took me a long time to get at that...at a really gut level.

## Making Art

I remember an artist I knew in Europe once said that there are two types of artists: those who see it before they paint and those who paint to see it. I'm definitely of the former school. I work in a direction, but have no fixed idea of what it will manifest. It will automatically reflect what I feel.

When I was teaching at the Art Gallery last week, one of the kids asked me how come I didn't paint houses and people and stuff. I do that in my drawings a lot. It's a way to work, but I also feel that in my work my imagination is really involved. If I just painted a cat you might think about your cat at home and may just close your mind. But if you are not sure of what my intention is, and you are willing to take the time to look, you start to imagine what I was intending. At some point our imaginations come together and then something happens. It is the sharing, the communication—the something else that happens at that point—that I am really after.

Materials and letting materials be themselves...that is part of what influences me. I use paper because I am most fluent with paper. I grew up with it...cutting and pasting. I would like to be fluent in another medium, but right now paper really suits me.

Do you consider yourself to be an artist or a woman first?

I was going to say right off that I'm an artist first but that's kind of absurd because I was obviously born a woman and that came first. So it's a bit like saying to a banana, "Are you a banana first or a fruit first?" I think that as an artist you bring together all your experience and put it into your work. You can't do otherwise.

Obviously you bring your experience as a woman into your work. I think that in training as artists, and in society in general, women have become more decided. Before, in order to make it, I think you had to consciously downplay your experiences as a woman and not bring it into your work. It wasn't valid enough or acceptable. You were given the impression that it just wouldn't go down. We went through a stage of removing. It isn't only with women, it was the downplaying of the feminine aspect, of not dealing with it in ourselves—all of us. I think that in a way art was a ground for men who didn't feel comfortable with completely cutting off that intuitive side of themselves.

## Folk Music & the Women's Movement

by Megan Davies

Folk music is one of the women's movement's most powerful means of communication; lyrics and melody both inspire us to move forward and help us celebrate the distance we have travelled thus far.

Contemporary women's folk music had its roots in the 1960s. Many individual artists who began performing and recording during the sixties, such as Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell and Judy Collins, are still active today.

The decade of the 70s witnessed dynamic growth and significant new directions within the field of women's music. Lyrics depicting independent women of strength were no longer random or accidental; instead, one can trace the emergence of a women's folk tradition with a definitely feminist message.

In the United States, two small independent women's recording labels, Olivia and Redwood, allowed feminist performers to

maintain the artistic control that larger, more commercial recording companies denied.

In comparison to the U.S., Canadian feminist/folk has been characterized by smaller efforts. However, a field of women's music has emerged that is both Canadian and feminist.

Local audiences are familiar with the intensely personal style of Ferron who plays both alone and with a backup band. Connie Kalder of Edmonton, Alberta performs in a somewhat lighter vein; she has also performed locally in the past year. The prairies are also represented by Heather Bishop of Manitoba who plays music with a strongly lesbian/feminist bias. Bishop will be performing with Ferron at the National Organization of Women in Law Conference in Victoria this February.

Eastern Canada has several feminist folk musicians of note. Rita MacNeil, a Cape Breton islander, uses traditional a cap-

pella techniques to perform her original material. The music performed by Beverly Copeland of Ontario has strong African overtones.

This new musical expression of women's experiences, unlike earlier works, often contain a very definite political comment on women's oppressed position within our society. Redwood's HOLY NEAR is perhaps the best example of this: songs such as "Fight Back" and "The Mountain Song" have become anthems of women's struggle.

From the birth of feminist folk with Alix Dobukin's pioneering album, LAVENDER JANE LOVES WOMEN, there has been a strong tradition of lesbian content in the art. The albums of Meg Christian and Chris Williams, both of Olivia, and Ferron, recorded on her own Lucy Records, contain beautiful and haunting love songs of women loving women.

Feminist folk has a tradition of intense audience commitment and involvement. A dedicated au-

dience who provides both encouragement and criticism has been a constant factor throughout the past decade of women's music.

Women's music festivals, scattered across Canada and the U.S., have provided an important forum in which female musicians can work together and, at the same time, reach a wider audience. Locally, the Vancouver Folk Festival places strong emphasis on both women and feminism. Female performers at the festival in 1982 included Meg Christian, Holly Near and Ferron.

Women's records of the feminist variety are available at several outlets in Victoria. Everywoman's Books has the best selection of feminist music with a good number of the bigger names such as Near and Williams; plus some more obscure L.P.s as well. Mezzrows, Richard's Record Shop and Lyle's Place are also places to look if you're searching for that elusive lavender label.

EMILY  
Meeting

Every  
Tuesday  
1:30 p.m.

Women's  
Centre  
Come with  
your ideas

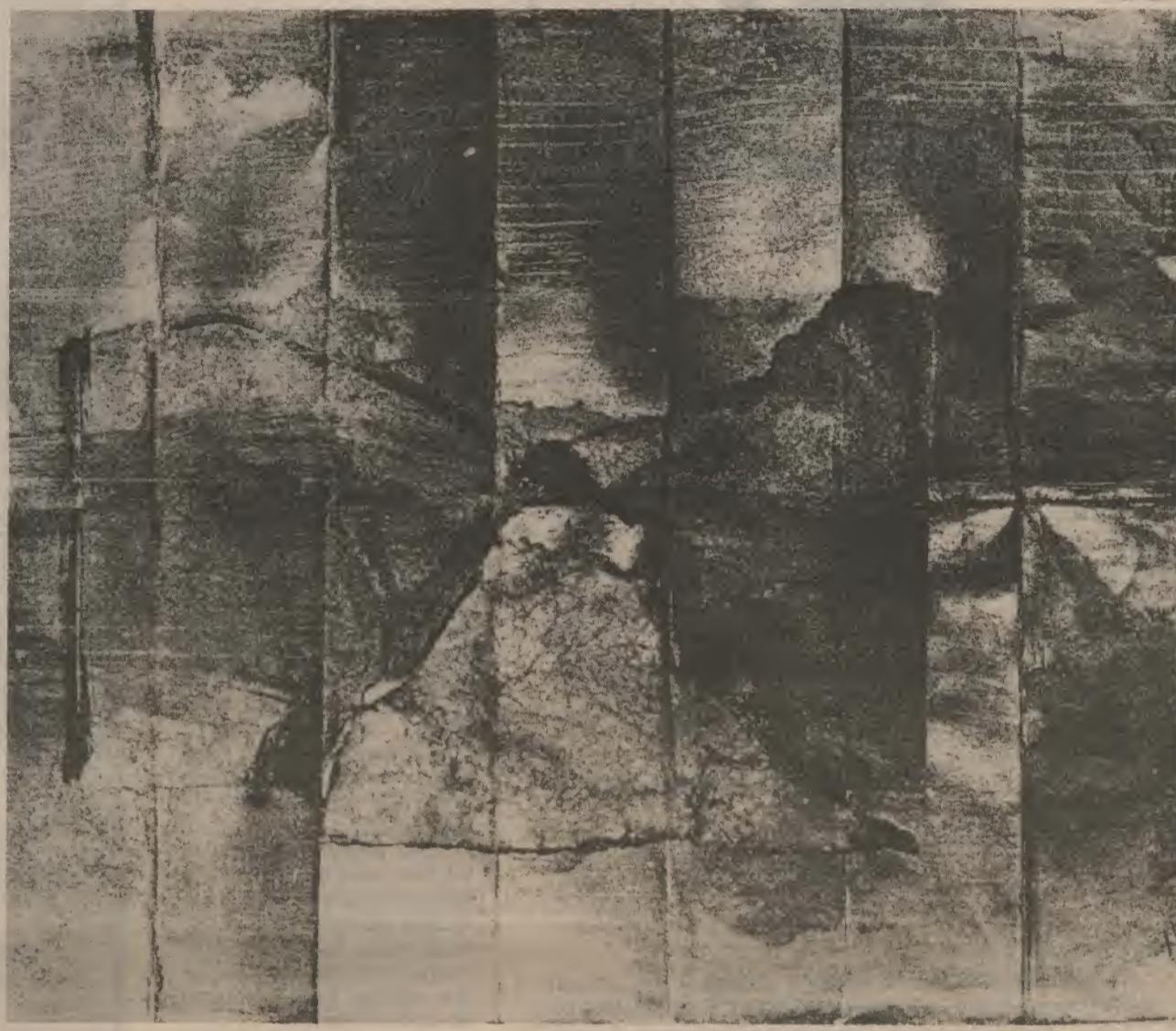
# — Thoughts on Art

That old fashioned idea of the Muse, waiting for her to come and visit, represents a feminine quality. If one is receptive to inspiration then I think that is like exercising the feminine. Art is an exercise of that. Actually, it's a combination of things because making art involves the outward manifesting which has been called the masculine aspect. It's a balance. That is one of the inherent beauties of the creative process.

A lot of that balance has been denied just as the artist's validity in our society has been denied. Men as artists...there have been a few that stand out that have "made it". The process of making art is not valued as much as "making it" in the business...but that's changing. At least I think it is.

I was told by a male professor that because I didn't work in a certain way I wouldn't make it. He didn't even want to be bothered to teach me. He said I was just wasting my time. Lots of women have had experiences like that. When I went to school in England I was the only female mature student in the institution, and a foreigner as well, so they didn't know what to make of me. I was living across from the school in a little tiny room. I was at school from early in the morning till late at night and I didn't know anyone. For a year that was my life. I had the head of the department tell me that he never saw me in class. He didn't see me there! He had so much of a problem acknowledging me that he made me invisible.

That has also been a quality of women, of becoming invisible. When I read Judy Chicago's "Through the Flower", I was so excited because she had documented something



that had happened to many women artists. It happens here at our own university as well. Having an awareness of it helps you feel you're not alone.

I think there has been an assumption, for a long time, through conditioning, that men are more serious about their

work. I've been in situations where that was assumed; watched that assumption in action. It's interesting to look at how many women are working and producing right here in Victoria...in all mediums. There is a new creative renaissance going on and it is very exciting.

## • Women's Words •

### Hard Feelings

edited by Alison Fell

This anthology of feminist fiction and poetry was put together from works that first appeared in the British publication "Spare Rib" magazine.

The story "My Death" is a darkly humourous tale of a woman who dies but can't afford to actually stop functioning because of her responsibility to her hubby and kids. She tries to tell her husband about her condition. He accuses her of being a hypochondriac. Her best friend responds with, "I'm worse than dead, I have this virus." Then she goes on to ask if the dead woman would mind picking up the kids at school that day. The heroine can't convince anyone that she actually is dead and it's not until she is finished her daily chores that she is actually allowed to die. She notes at

the end that the oblivion of her death "was no different from the usual." The story is a stark comment on the lives of unappreciated women who work in the home.

"Uma", a story by Amy Rao, is the story of the death of an East Indian woman and the cultural consequences. The irony is accentuated because it is told from the male perspective, that of Uma's husband.

When he is informed that his wife is gravely ill, he is in the middle "of the most exciting chess game — my Queen was in trouble, I finished it and left for home."

He speaks from the perspective of a male of his society. He does not have a particularly strong emotional attachment to the woman to whom he has been married for twelve years. To him it is an

inconvenience that he has lost the person who kept house for him, fed and milked the cow and cared for the children. There "was nothing special" about the illness his wife died of. It was the type of disease "that females suffer from after repeated childbirths; and after all she was twenty-six and no longer young."

"Uma" is a finely crafted story that makes use of irony to express an East Indian woman author's anger at culturally reinforced disrespect and abuse of women.

HARD FEELINGS is a diverse anthology, it crosses cultural, class barriers, and feminist factions. The book is published by The Woman's Press, a London based publishing house, and is available here in Canada for \$4.95.



## Looking Glass



by Brenda Percy and S. Whitemoon

### RANDOM REFLECTIONS

Words are often more than we think. Words are alive; personalize them and verify them. Explore them freshly.

Mirror:

*"Something that gives a faithful reflection or true picture of something else."*

AMERICAN COLLEGE DICTIONARY

Mother:

*"...give origin or rise to; to acknowledge oneself the author of; assume as one's own."*

IBID.

Radical:

*"...going to the root or origin, fundamental; existing inherently in a thing or person."*

IBID.

Subjective:

*"...arising in the mind itself; derived from inner consciousness; characterized by individuality."*

NUTTALS STANDARD DICTIONARY

Violence:

*"...a distortion of meaning or fact."*

AMERICAN COLLEGE DICTIONARY

Distort:

*"...to pervert; misrepresent."*

IBID.

NINA HAGEN  
"ANGST LOS"  
CBS RECORDS, 1983

On first listening, Nina's latest release is something of a shock—the unmistakeable slick sound of production by Giorgio Moroder (of "Flashdance" fame) leaves a familiar and unpleasant flavour. But once past this initial reaction, I found myself again captivated by her irrepressible energy and sense of humour.

*"There is no such a thing called death  
It's just a transformation  
Boy George, Rommel and Queen Elizabeth  
All go from station to station..."*

For anyone, like myself, who's a confirmed Nina Hagen fan, this is another album you'll end up playing till it wears out. If you didn't appreciate her before, it'll probably drive you mad—but you sure can dance to it.

ZOE FAIRBAIRNS  
"BENEFITS"  
BARD/AVON BOOKS 1979

Novels that deal with feminist issues are rare. Novels as good as this one are rarer still. Although it is in many ways a chilling vision of a future in which women are controlled and manipulated by the government in terms of their childbearing function, it is also a story of women's strength and resilience in response to crisis. It is a sensitive and unselfconscious book. Never does its concentration on women's issues seem contrived. The ordinary, believable nature of the women and their situation makes the unfolding story a powerful and affective one.

*"...embrace what you do not know as a stick knows and is drawn to it."*

—from "With Secret Friends" by Cooper Edens, 1981  
Star and Elephant Book from Green Tiger Press.

Magical, evocative pictures and words—an imaginative delight.

Riddle

*"...a question or statement so framed as to exercise one's ingenuity in answering it or discovering its meaning."*

AMERICAN COLLEGE DICTIONARY

When is a woman a feminist is a lesbian?

For the next *Emily* we need:

★poetry

★photographs

## FILM REVIEW

### Common-sense

By Nora Ready

The film "Commonsense" is a documentation of women's nonviolent direct action opposing Cruise missiles. It records the various actions taken by the members of the Greenham Common peace camp.

Greenham Common is the side of a U.S./British military base near Newbury, England. The peace camp was established in September of 1981.

The film records five of the actions taken by members of the camp. Included in this is footage of the 24 hour blockade of Greenham Common on March 21/22, 1982. One scene depicts British police dragging women away from a getaway so that trucks servicing the base can get through. While this is taking place supporters of the blockade are shouting at the police, "You are protecting the American army from British women. You are being used. We are ashamed of you."

Other actions recorded in the film were the "die-in" in front of the London stock exchange on the day of an official visit from President Reagan, and the encircling of the military base by some 30,000 women.

The film is in colour and runs 40 minutes. It's available in Super 8 and video from London Greenham Office, 5 Leonard St, London EC2.

## Alice Ages

FEMINIST  
COUNSELLOR

1015  
CHAMBERLAIN ST.  
VICTORIA, B.C.

PHONE 598-6104

# Calynder

Thursday, November 3

### Feminist Forum

- topics to be discussed:
- a discussion of feminism on campus
- women in course unions
- working in collective
- place: Rm. A208 University Center
- time: 7:30 pm to 10 pm

Friday, November 4

### Women and Violence: Images and Realities

- a one hour live program produced by S.F.U.'s Department of Criminology
- telecast on converter channel 18 (Knowledge Network)
- time: 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm
- call: 291-3213

Saturday, November 5

### Single Parent Resource Center Annual Auction

- place: St. John's Hall, Quadra and Balmoral
- time: 2:00 pm
- call: 385-1114

Wednesday, November 9

### Women's Coffee House

- all women and children, \$1 cover charge, every Wednesday
- place: 1923 Fernwood
- time: 9:00 pm to 1:00 am

Friday to Sunday, November 11 to 13

### Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women Conference

- 29 workshops
- place: Four Season's Hotel, Vancouver, B.C.
- call: 685-9709, register early

Saturday, December 3

### Provincial Connection Mini Conference

- a B.C. Lesbian Support Network education group
- fee: \$15 - \$25
- place: not yet confirmed
- time: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
- call: Donna at 386-7536, registration deadline is Nov. 3

### THE EMILY NEEDS YOU...

THE EMILY is a forum for women at UVic to voice our concerns. We try to put out the paper in an atmosphere that is not alienating for women, especially those who have not been involved with a newspaper before. Our bias is women's news. We are not so much concerned with the exclusion of the male perspective as we are with the inclusion of women's views. If you have story ideas, ads, or notices that you'd like in THE EMILY, drop by the Women's centre. Our meetings are every Tuesday at 1:30 pm.

Copy deadline for next  
*Emily* — November 11

### (THE EMILY) QUOTE:

"You are protecting the American army from the British women. You are being used. We are ashamed."

—Women of the Greenham Common peace camp.

Staff this issue:

Judy Andrew, Katy Chan, Suzy Coulter, Michelle Eshom, Barb Grantham, Heidi Horn, Jean Kavanagh, Brenda Percy, Nora Ready, Sage Sinats, Linda St. Louis, Saide Whitemoon.

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